



AARRC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 15, 2015

Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity

Board Members in Attendance: Chair Pattiy Torno, Vice Chair Carleton Collins, Stephanie Brown, Councilman Jan Davis, Esther Cartwright, Joe Ferikes, Karl Koon, Brownie Newman, George Morosani, Ricky Silver, Peter Sprague, Pam Turner

Board Members Absent: Jerry Vahaun, Cindy Visnich Weeks

Staff in Attendance: Stephanie Monson Dahl, Sasha Vrtunski, Caroline Long

Guests: Jesse Plaster

Chair Torno called the Commission to order at 4:03 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Koon made a motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting and the motion passed unanimously.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

a. Planning and Design Review Committee: Form-Based Code Initiative

Mr. Collins stated City staff is expecting submittals to the Form-Based Code RFP in Mid-February. They also heard from staff about progress of the East Bank of the French Broad River Greenway, and are expecting to have drawings in hand by June for baseline for property acquisition. The plans include walking trails and community spaces from Hill Street down to Amboy Road and throughout the corridor. The process will be completed in 2019.

Chair Torno has asked if staff can ask Jason Gilliland, of Site Design Studios, the landscape architect of the East Bank Greenway for RAD TIP to come share his plans with the full commission in February or March 2015.

b. Networking Committee: Consolidated Action Plan Focus Group

The Networking Committee and City of Asheville staff Jeff Staudinger, Tara Irby & Shannon Capezzali, came together at Mountain Housing Opportunities on January 5, 2015. Staff were interested in using the Committee as a focus group to get insight into housing trends in the community. CD staff are working on policies and goals to guide their annual federal funding cycle. The 5-year consolidated plan assesses affordable housing, market conditions, and place-based investment decisions. The plan is due to be updated in July of this year, and City staff are currently working with constituencies for data analysis. The funding total amounts to around \$850,000. Ms. Cartwright asked if there was a previous 5 year comp plan that AARRC could look at; Mr. Davis stated that MHO has been a large recipient of HOME funding in years past, and that the monies sometimes are allocated but not spent. In that case it may go to Habitat or

other organizations. Additionally, some of the monies will go to organizations for human services.

Additionally, Peter gave an update on the Committee's work with improving lines of communication between appointing boards. He stated that with a new County Commissioner recently appointed to the Commission, now is a great time to strengthen ties between appointing boards. The Committee has a tentative February meeting to discuss their work plan to make sure they are in line with the AARRC's goals.

c. Staff Report on RADTIP

The City is moving into land acquisition and construction agreements for RADTIP. The City will not be engaging in discussions with property owners about how the RADTIP design impacts their property, as these conversations could be perceived as a negotiation, which is prohibited due to state and federal funding requirements. Staff can only start discussing land acquisition once NCDOT authorizes the City to begin these conversations. Staff expect this authorization to occur in June. The City will then use contractors for about 90% of the total land acquisitions. Ms. Monson Dahl stated Commissioners should direct any inquiries to City Staff.

d. River District Design Review: 95 Roberts Street

Ms. Vrtunski stated the project is a renovation of a mixed-use 70,000 square foot existing building on 1.56 acres. This is a Level II project which has been to the Technical Review Committee, was reviewed by the River District Design Review Committee, and will go to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Jesse Plaster is the property owner and architect. He has applied for historic tax credits, and is working within national parks service standards. He will complete the sidewalk along the entire property, and parking will be available across the street on an adjacent parcel and behind the building on the railroad right-of-way. Staff is working on an amendment to City ordinances to allow the form of requested parking across the street. The parking will feature an innovative back-in design which will increase cyclist safety.

Mr. Collins stated the Committee was in favor of the project. The building will have new efficient windows that will match the style and character of the building, and they will open up the bricked-over windows as well. There will be a new exit stair tower on the north side of the building, and there are plans for developing the rooftop. Mr. Collins recommended the Commissioners vote in the affirmative that the initial phase of 85 Roberts Street renovation meets the intent and spirit of the River District Design Review guidelines, and opened the floor for discussion of the project.

Mr. Koon asked if there would be an elevator, and Mr. Plaster stated it is included in the stair tower.

Mr. Newman asked what the uses of the building would be. Mr. Plaster stated the building will have at least one full foodservice location, some retail, and the rest will be predominantly arts studios. He noted they are considering residential units on the fifth floor, but have not yet determined the use of that floor.

Mr. Morosani made a motion to accept the Planning and Design Review Committee's recommendation that they vote in the affirmative that the initial phase of the 95 Roberts Street renovation meets the intent and spirit of the River District Design Review Guidelines. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. Organizational Development Discussion

Chair Torno recapped the City of Asheville Boards and Commissions luncheon. She stated the main charge of Boards and Commissions is policy research and public engagement. She distributed copies of the City's FY15 Strategic Operating Plan. Council has asked for feedback going into the FY16 strategic planning process. Mr. Davis noted that last year Council had one hour of public input during their Strategic Planning session and decided to allow for more of this during this year's retreat. Council will modify the SOP with the results from this year's strategic planning retreat, and they want to rely heavily on the input of Boards and Commissions.

Chair Torno noted that the City will also update the 2025 comprehensive plan, hopefully within 18 months of getting new planning director. Ms. Brown asked if it would be part of the process for the 2025 plan to determine how much staff is necessary to stay ahead of the development curve. Mr. Davis stated the comprehensive plan is more for land use planning; what dictates zoning land use plan and staff has to come up to that. Ms. Monson Dahl noted this plan is not about internal organization or operations, but instead focuses on the big picture vision for the community. There are individual workplans for each department which are derived from this plan.

Mr. Morosani asked about strategies to bring other municipalities and Commissions into the discussion about the Riverway. Mr. Newman stated he has been considering specific opportunities to invite the Buncombe County Commissioners to the Riverfront to see current and future projects.

Ms. Monson Dahl handed out copies of the AARRC charter and asked them to think critically about the document, and determine whether all the goals are still pertinent, or need to be updated. She also went over the membership terms for the board, noting the Commissioners will see turnover in appointees within the next couple years and think about what this will mean for commission. The membership document is a tool to see when changes will occur, and to determine whether the AARRC has a diverse membership in terms of professions or property ownership.

Chair Torno stated that over the next few months the Commission is planning to do a 5-year review to assess their strengths and weaknesses. This process will help them get clarity about changes they might like to see in the mission statement or the positions. The Chair asked if this should be charged to a subcommittee or if the Commissioners should engage in it together. Mr. Morosani stated it should be all the commissioners discussing together. Chair Torno suggested it could be a group comprised of one member from each appointing board. She stated the goal is

to review the mission statement, composition, communication strategies, technical advisory, funding, and appointing boards' contributions to the AARRC.

Ms. Brown suggested the Commissioners find two dates to have these discussions, and then forward their findings onto a smaller group. Chair Torno asked anyone who is not currently serving on a subcommittee to be a part of the smaller group.

Chair Torno noted there is a tradition of holding the AARRC retreat out of town every other year. Ms. Dahl has suggested Knoxville for this year, due to their vibrant riverfront and adoption of form-based code, but if other people have suggestions to please bring them up. The current options for retreat dates are Friday June 5th or 12th.

Chair Torno stated the Commissioners homework is to read the Wilma Dykeman Riverway Plan and the Riverside Drive Development Plan. She hopes to recommend that Council add the Riverside Drive Development Plan to the Wilma Dykeman Riverway Plan.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Brown noted there will be a community forum to discuss short term rentals next Wednesday, January 21st from 1-3pm at the Diana Wortham Theater.

Mr. Silver noted that the Commissioners might also review the AARRC bylaws, as they provide structure to the Commission and might need updating.

6. ADJOURN

Chair Torno adjourned the meeting at 5:12 p.m. without objection.